

Basic Detail Report



Headrest

Date
20th Century

Primary Maker
Dinka

Medium
Wood

Description

Headrests made using the natural shape of wood with branches protruding as legs were found throughout eastern Africa, but particularly amongst the Dinka and Lotuko of South Sudan, and the Rendille of Kenya. These can vary widely in design. Some—like this headrest—have carved platforms and straightened legs and others are designed to look like polished tree sections coincidentally in the shape of a headrest. Despite its spindly look, because it is made from one piece of wood it can support a considerable amount of weight. As with the other headrests of eastern Africa, this would have had a more functional importance of protecting one’s hair style rather than having a spiritual importance.

Dimensions

7 3/4 × 14 3/4 × 4 1/8 in. (19.7 × 37.5 × 10.5 cm)